

Message Text

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SUBJ: 63RD ECOSOC: AGENDA ITEM 4 - PLO MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA

REF: A. GENEVA 6044, B. GENEVA 6190, C. GENEVA 6234

1. REFTEL B REPORTED THE COUNTRY BREAKDOWN OF THE JULY 22
PLENARY VOTE ON DRAFT RESOLUTION E/L 1778 ADMITTING THE PLO TO
FULL MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA (27-11-12, WITH ONE PRESENT BUT "NOT
PARTICIPATING" AND THREE ABSENT), AND REFTEL C FORWARDED TEXT
OF AMBASSADOR WELLS' STATEMENT IN DEBATE JUNE 22 ON THIS QUESTION.

2. WITH DUE APOLOGIES FOR NOT GETTING THIS OFF SOONER, THIS
TELEGRAM SUMMARIZES THE LAST TWO DAYS OF THE LENGTHY DEBATE ON
THIS MATTER, JULY 21-22, AND WE MAKE A FEW COMMENTS AT THE END.

3. SPONSORS OF THE RESOLUTION WERE AFGHANISTAN, ALGERIA, BANGLADESH,
CUBA, EGYPT, IRAQ, KUWAIT, LEBANON, MALAYSIA, MAURITANIA,
PAKISTAN, SOMALIA, SUDAN, SYRIA, TUNISIA, UGANDA, YEMEN
AND YUGOSLOVIA. FIRST DAY'S (JULY 20) STATEMENTS BY LEBANESE
OBSERVER, KUWAITI OBSERVER, SYRIA AND YEMEN WERE SUMMARIZED IN
REFTEL A. ADDITIONAL SPEAKERS ON JULY 21-22 SUPPORTING THE
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RESOLUTION WERE IRAQ, CHINA, AFGHANISTAN, TUNISIA, PAKISTAN (WHO
FORMALLY INTRODUCED IT ON JULY 21), ALGERIA, UGANDA, PLO OBSER-
VER, GREECE, PAKISTAN AGAIN, AND TOGO. SPEAKERS AGAINST THE
RESOLUTION WERE DENMARK (FOR THE EC-9), ISRAELI OBSERVER AND U.S.
PAKISTAN ASKED FOR THE ROLL-CALL. EXPLANATIONS OF VOTE AFTER
THE VOTE WERE MADE BY ETHIOPIA, JAPAN, PERU, PHILIPPINES, IRAN
AND CANADA, AND FURTHER STATEMENTS IN REPLY AFTER THE VOTE WERE

MADE BY SYRIA, PLO, AND LEBANON.

4. PAKISTAN, ON INTRODUCING THE RESOLUTION, TRIED TO SET A REASONED, NON-CONTENTIOUS TONE. HE ARGUED THAT FULL PLO MEMBERSHIP HAD THE UNANIMOUS SUPPORT OF MEMBERS OF ECWA AND WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE AIMS OF ECWA; THAT THE CASE OF PALESTINE WAS UNIQUE AND THAT ECOSOC WOULD THEREFORE BE DOING NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY; AND THAT FULL MEMBERSHIP WOULD BE NOTHING NEW BUT WOULD SIMPLY REMOVE AN ANOMALY SINCE THE PLO WAS ALREADY A FULL MEMBER OF THE ARAB LEAGUE, ISLAMIC CONFERENCE AND NON-ALIGNED AND WAS A PERMANENT OBSERVER TO THE UN AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. HE CONTINUED HIS ALICE-IN-WONDERLAND REASONING BY SAYING THE CO-SPONSORS DO NOT CLAIM THE PLO IS A STATE BUT A SPECIAL CASE: THAT THEY WISH TO KEEP UN RULES (IE., MEMBERSHIP BEING LIMITED TO STATES) INTACT, BUT THAT BY TREATING THE PLO AS A SUI GENERIS CASE THIS WOULD BE THE EXCEPTION TO PROVE AND EVEN STRENGTHEN THE RULE AND IT WOULD THEREFORE SET NO PRECEDENT; AND THAT THE RESOLUTION ITSELF PRESERVES THE RULE BY PROVIDING THAT FUTURE ECWA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS MUST BE FROM UN MEMBER STATES. HE REITERATED THE POSITION THAT THE PLO WAS THE COMPETENT ENTITY TO REPRESENT THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE; MAINTAINED THAT MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA PRESENTED NO POLITICAL PROBLEMS SINCE IT DEALT WITH ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES; BUT AT THE SAME TIME STATED IT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

5. MOST OF THE OTHER SUPPORTIVE SPEAKERS DREW TO GREATER OR LESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEGREE FROM THESE SAME ARGUMENTS, WITH SOME DIFFERENT ADDITIONAL WRINKLES, SUCH AS: IRAQ SAID FULL MEMBERSHIP FOR THE PLO WOULD ENHANCE ITS INTERNATIONAL POSITION AND STRENGTHEN ITS STRUGGLE AGAINST ZIONISM AND RACISM. TUNISIA, IN ARGUING THAT NO PRECEDENT WOULD BE SET, WEAKENED THE ARGUMENT BY SAYING THAT THE ONLY PARALLELS WERE THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS RECOGNIZED BY THE OAU. ALGERIA AND SYRIA ARGUED JUSTICE AND RIGHTS FOR THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE SUFFERING OPPRESSION ETC., ALGERIA ADDING THAT NEITHER THE CHARTER NOR ECOSOC RULES PREVENT "PEOPLES" FROM BEING REPRESENTED, AND SYRIA ADDING THAT THE CHARTER CALLS FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT OF "PEOPLES," NOT STATES. PLO OBSERVER RAN THROUGH THE WHOLE GAMUT OF ARGUMENTS, INCLUDING THE ASSERTION THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE RESOLUTION WAS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RATHER THAN POLITICAL, WHILE IN THE NEXT BREATH STATING IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO SEPARATE THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL AND THAT ONE DAY THE PALESTINIANS WOULD ACHIEVE THEIR RIGHTS TO A STATE; HE ALSO IMPLIED THAT OPPOSITION MEANT SUPPORT FOR A POLICY OF OCCUPATION AND AGGRESSION. GREECE WAS LOW KEY IN COMING OUT FOR SUPPORT, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING A DILEMMA (SEE GENEVA 6336).

6. DENMARK, ON BEHALF OF THE EC-9, STATED THE RESOLUTION WOULD CREATE SERIOUS LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS, THAT THE COM-

MUNITY HAD HOPED IT WOULD NOT BE INTRODUCED, AND THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO VOTE AGAINST IT. THE U.S. STATEMENT CAME SOMEWHAT LATER, AFTER ISRAEL.

7. THE ISRAELI OBSERVER SPOKE OF HIGH PRESSURE FROM THE ARAB STATES TO GRANT NOTHING LESS THAN THEIR MAXIMUM DEMANDS OF FULL PLO MEMBERSHIP IN ECWA, SOMETHING NOT GRANTED TO ANY OTHER LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN AFRICA, ASIA OR LATIN AMERICA. HE ASSERTED THAT VOTES ON THE MIDDLE EAST WERE NOT BASED ON MERITS BUT BECAUSE THE ARABS WANTED THEM. HE SAID THAT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ISRAEL IN THE ORIGINAL RESOLUTION ON ECWA WOULD BE COMPOUNDED BY ADMISSION OF PLO. HE CHALLENGED THE IRAQI ARGUMENT ON STRUGGLE AGAINST ZIONISM, ETC. (ABOVE) AND ASSERTED PLO DID NOT MEET CHARTER REQUIREMENTS SINCE IT WAS NEITHER A STATE NOR PEACE-LOVING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ING, QUOTING FROM THE PLO COVENANT RE LIQUIDATION OF ISRAEL AND ZIONISM, AND ASSERTING PLO WAS TERRORIST. HE ALSO MADE THE TACTICAL ERROR OF QUOTING GORA OF LEBANON TO THE EFFECT THAT THE PLO WAS ACTING LIKE A STATE WITHIN A STATE.

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8. IN EXPLANATIONS OF VOTE AFTER THE VOTE, ETHIOPIA STATED IT SYMPATHIZED WITH PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND SUPPORTED PLO IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND AFRO-ARAB SUMMIT, BUT ABSTAINED BECAUSE

THERE WAS NO PRECEDENT FOR MEMBERSHIP FOR A NON-STATE. (WE ASSUME ETHIOPIA ALSO HAD ITS EYE COCKED TOWARD ITS OWN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.) JAPAN SAID IT ABSTAINED BECAUSE SEVERAL POINTS REQUIRED FURTHER CONSIDERATION INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS RE GA RESOLUTION 3237 (XXIX), BUT THAT THIS DID NOT CHANGE THE GOJ'S POSITION ON THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND THE STATUS OF THE PLO AS THEIR REPRESENTATIVE. PERU SAID IT SYMPATHIZED WITH THE RIGHTS OF THE PLO TO PARTICIPATE BUT ABSTAINED FOR STRICTLY JURIDICAL REASONS SINCE THE CHARTER AND RULES LIMIT FULL MEMBERSHIP TO STATES. PHILIPPINES SAID IT ABSTAINED WITH DEEP REGRET ON GROUNDS OF PRINCIPLE, EVEN THOUGH IT HAD SUPPORTED PLO PARTICIPATION IN OTHER FORUMS, SINCE FULL MEMBERSHIP OF NON-STATES WAS CONTRARY TO UN MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS. IRAN REITERATED ITS BONDS OF AFFINITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND ITS SUPPORT FOR THEIR LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS, BUT SAID IT ABSTAINED FOR JURIDICAL CONSIDERATIONS, IE., THAT ONLY STATES CAN BE FULL MEMBERS OF UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, REGIONAL COMMISSIONS, ETC. (GENEVA 6351). CANADA EXPLAINED "NO" VOTE ON THE BASIS THAT FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE UN HAS ALWAYS BEEN LIMITED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO STATES AND THAT GRANTING FULL MEMBERSHIP IN A UN COMMISSION TO A NON-STATE WOULD BE A VIOLATION. ARGENTIAN (PRESENT BUT "NOT PARTICIPATING") DID NOT MAKE THE NEGATIVE EXPLANATION WE WERE TOLD IT WOULD.

9. SYRIA'S REPLY (ABOVE) ATTEMPTED TO ANSWER STATEMENTS RE LEGAL IMPLICATIONS. PLO THANKED THOSE WHO VOTED YES AND THOSE WHO STATED THEIR VOTES DID NOT DIMINISH THEIR SYMPATHY FOR THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE; REPLYING TO ISRAEL, HE DEPLORED FALSE ACCUSATIONS BY A STATE WHOSE LEADER BEGIN AND MENTOR BEN GURION WERE BOTH TERRORISTS. LEBANESE OBSERVER, ALSO REPLYING TO ISRAEL, POINTED TO IRONY OF LATTER'S COMMENT ON LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY WHEN LEBANON HAS BEEN VICTIM OF VICIOUS ATTACKS BY ISRAEL.

10. COMMENT. THIS WHOLE EXERCISE TURNED OUT TO HAVE BEEN PRETTY MUCH A LOST CAUSE FROM THE START, GIVEN THE MAJORITY THAT THE ARABS CAN COMMAND ON THIS ISSUE AMONG THEIR SYMPATHIZERS PLUS THOSE AFFRAID TO BUCK THEM. NEVERTHELESS, WE THINK THE SCORE OF 24 COUNTRIES UNWILLING TO VOTE "YES" (11 "NO'S", 12 ABSTENTIONS AND 1 PRESENT BUT "NOT PARTICIPATING") VERSUS 27 "YESES" IS A GOOD INDICATION OF THE DEEP DIVISION OVER THIS ISSUE. HOWEVER, EVEN IF A FEW DISAPPOINTING "YESES" HAD BEEN ABSTENTIONS AND A FEW DISAPPOINTING ABSTENTIONS HAD BEEN "NO'S", THIS WOULD NOT HAVE ALTERED SUFFICIENTLY THE 27 TO 11 DECISION. WITH RESPECT TO THE LATIN AMERICANS, FROM WHOM WE HAD EXPECTED THREE "NO'S", IT SEEMS THAT CONSULTATIONS AMONG THEM RESULTED IN THE NEARLY SOLID ABSTENTIONS. ALL THE SAME, WE THINK CONSIDERABLE SATISFACTION CAN BE DRAWN FROM THE FACT THAT ONLY TWO LATIN AMERICANS (CUBA AND JAMAICA) AND ONE WE0 (GREECE, ALBEIT DISAPPOINTLY)

VOTED "YES".

11. IT ALSO SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE EARLY HOPEFUL SIGNS THAT ARAB MODERATES SUCH AS THE EGYPTIAN OBSERVERS MIGHT BE ABLE TO PER-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUADE THE PLO'S MILITANT BACKERS TO AVOID A DIVISION VOTE BY SOME SUCH DEVICE AS DEFERRAL FOR STUDY PROVED ILLUSORY. THE PLO AND ITS BACKERS WERE OBVIOUSLY MORE INTERESTED IN TAKING ONE MORE STEP ALONG THE ROAD TO "LEGITIMACY" EVEN AT THE EXPENSE OF THE DIVISION THAT OCCURRED, PARTICULARLY SINCE DAY BEFORE THE VOTE, PLO EXCLUSION FROM BEGIN PEACE PLAN WAS FRONT-PAGE NEWS. ARGUMENTS THAT THIS MOVE WAS FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PURPOSES WITHOUT POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS WERE, OF COURSE, SHEER NONSENSE. VANDEN HEUVEL

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